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**All For A Stranger**
*A Father And Son Respond To A Cry For Help*

**Eduardo Ugarte and his teenage son, Marcos,** were sitting on the couch in their home in Troutdale, Oregon (USA) in 2012 when they heard screaming down the street. It came from a house that was four doors away. At first they believed they were hearing an argument, but Marcos pointed to a glow behind the house.

Sensing danger, Marcos and his father “took off running for their neighbor’s house where a family of five, including a grandmother and two children, was trapped inside,” according to a national news reporter.

**Alex Ma, the father at the burning house,** had tried to get upstairs to rescue his son, Cody, but the thick smoke prevented him from reaching the eight-year-old boy. Cody had locked himself in his room. Marcos grabbed a ladder and climbed to the second floor to the boy’s bedroom. “He burst through the window and rescued the boy,” the reporter said.

Ugarte told reporters that he and his son had never met the family. Despite having said hello to each other, they had never held a conversation.

**“Hero is a title well-earned** by this young man,” a reader posted online. “He showed incredible bravery and determination, and all for a stranger.” Another reader observed: “He has a big heart; the kind that will risk personal sacrifice for others.”

Like the online readers, I too was moved by this story and impressed by the son’s bravery. But I was also struck by the team effort of the son and his father. When they realized this family was in trouble, both of them jumped up and made a dash to the burning house.

Their concern for this family reminded me of another Father-Son team who took action to save people in trouble. I’m speaking, of course, of the Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ.

**Without Christ in our lives** we are separated from God because of our sins: “But your iniquities have separated you from your God; and your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He will not hear” (Isa. 59:2 NKJV).

Our sins have alienated us, making us strangers: “... At that time you were without Christ, being aliens ... and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world” (Eph. 2:12). Living in a sinful state means that we are not only strangers, but we are enemies of God (Col. 1:21). We also risk being punished for our sins: “For the wages of sin is death” (Rom. 6:23).

However, like the father and son in our story, God the Father and His Son, Jesus, knew our condition and took steps to save us. Even though we were estranged from God, He showed His love for us. “But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us” (Rom. 5:8). “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life” (Jn. 3:16).

**As you reflect on this news,** remember that God hears you when you cry for help and when you call on Him to be saved from your sins. The prophet Jonah said, “I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the Lord, and He heard me” (Jn. 2:2 KJV).

Have you called on God to be saved? If not, will you do it today? [We can tell you how.](https://www.gtpress.org/gtweb/gtmag/mag14/1410/goodnews.html)

*By Roscoe Barnes III*

Top of Form

Bottom of Form